

## Resurrection by prettyboiiharringrove

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**Summary:**

Harringrove Halloween Countdown // October 13 — no one can force Steve to do anything, and that includes saying goodbye. He's not ready to lose Billy, so he simply refuses to.

(part two of the demonic haunting au)

## Resurrection

It's not like you see on tv. Billy doesn't bolt upright while gasping for air. He isn't dead and then alive again, it's not as cut and dry. It's dark, and cold, and lonely, and then he's waking up and his throat is sore, he's got cotton mouth, and he finds himself searching his surroundings, praying that he made it to the good place.

It doesn't feel like resurrection, not that he would know how that was supposed to feel. He feels alive, feels sore and exhausted, like he normally does after a really good fight or a really bad beating. He didn't expect the afterlife to be so...normal.

His words are caught in his throat when he sees Neil unconscious on the floor next to his bed. The last time he had seen Neil there his mother was still alive. Billy used to have dreadful nightmares and Neil would lay by his bed as a comfort; looking back, Billy knows that every kind thing Neil did was to build up enough emotional blackmail to make the scared little boy keep his mouth shut.

He didn't make it to the good place. Reliving the days where he thought his father still loved him with the context he has now isn't what he thought he'd get from hell, but it sure qualifies as torture, an emotional cattle prod pressing against his tender skin.

"Babe? Baby, you awake?" okay, that wasn't expected. On the one hand, he feels five years old again with his father unconscious on the floor below him, but on the other he hears Steve's gentle voice soothing him. He follows the voice, turning to face Steve and there it is again, hell. He's come face to face with Steve's tear stained, snot covered face. He'd clearly been ugly crying, and he seems to have varying amounts of blood covering different parts of his body. He's too messy to be able to tell if Steve has any wounds and where they would be. Seeing Steve in such a state is definitely Hell for Billy, not just the bad place but the *worst* place.

"S-Stevie?" it hurts to get the words out. Without thinking, his hand reaches up to clasp at his own throat; he flinches when he feels jagged stitching holding his sore wound together. "Steve, you shouldn't be here."

Steve is by his side within seconds, pulling his hand away before he causes more damage, as if that were possible.

“I’m dead, I-I died, you shouldn’t be here,” he repeats, becoming more distraught. He made a last minute decision to let Steve live, to let Steve find a future, to be safe and happy without him. Tears start to blur his vision as he panics. He’s startled back to the present when he notices that his own vision has gone red. He wipes at his eyes as he tries to steady his own breathing; when he pulls away his hand he sees that he’s crying blood, and that does absolutely nothing to calm him down. “Steve, what’s going on?”

His eyes dart around the room, searching for any explanation that he can find, and it’s then that he notices the pool of blood forming where he had previously assumed Neil was peacefully sleeping. Turns out he may not be the only corpse in the room.

Steve looks at him with wide eyes, and he looks guilty, but he lacks even a shred of regret. He doesn’t go to say anything, just gently holds Billy’s face between his hands like he’s the most precious thing Steve’s ever seen.

As Billy’s confusion and concern build, he realizes he doesn’t like Steve’s silence and repeats himself. “What’s going on?” he’s a bit more forceful this time, but then he has to swallow hard and he realizes that he’s craving his weight in water.

“I was so scared it wouldn’t work,” Steve chokes out, diving forward to wrap his arms around Billy, only easing up once he hears Billy whine, remembering how fragile he still is.

“What wouldn’t work?” Billy questions, falling into the embrace and moving to hold Steve in return. When he had said goodbye, he didn’t think he’d be seeing him again so soon. He thought he’d have to wait years at the very least, but maybe even an eternity, maybe he’d never see him again. He didn’t think it’d be less than twenty four hours though. It still feels like too long; dying alone isn’t something he’d like to experience again. He’s grateful that he gets to stare into those big beautiful eyes again.

“The spell. A life for a life. I was worried it might not take since the

sacrifice wasn't pure," Neil Hargrove was far from pure, and the idea that he was an equal exchange for Billy didn't sit right with either of them, but it would make sense that in certain situations dark magic might want even darker souls.

Honestly, the only thing it really affected was how long it took for Billy to wake up, and the fact that he still looks like an extra off the set of a horror film. Steve has to resist the urge to trace over the stitches now that Billy's awake. He makes a mental note to put together a balm to put on Billy's wound later, god knows he has the herbs.

"A life for a life," Billy repeats softly, trying to put the pieces together. He was dead an hour ago, and now he's been brought back with his father taking his place. It's a lot to take in.

"His for yours," Steve nods, finally pulling away enough to look at Billy. "It was an easy choice."

There are no more words to say, nothing to fill this moment, and all Billy wants is to hold Steve, to kiss him, to taste him one last time before they have to face the mess that is Neil Hargrove's corpse; that asshole would keep causing problems for them even after he was dead. He can never just make shit easy for them.

"I love you," Billy whispers; Steve moves to kiss him before Billy can get out the apology that instinctually follows. They can save that for later; they can save the whole mess for later, now Steve just needs to hold Billy. No one will blame him when he wakes up each night for the next two months to make sure Billy's still breathing.